



## ELK GROVE COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

Fire ■ Emergency Medical Services ■ Parks & Recreation

### ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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### **Elk Grove Community Services District** **Impacts of Duplicative Park System Operated by City of Elk Grove**

The City of Elk Grove is proceeding with plans to create a city-run park system even though parks are the responsibility of the voter-controlled Elk Grove Community Services District. The city's initial foray into the operations of a park department is focused in the Laguna Ridge development area. This is the first of what the city says will be several park projects they intend to pursue in connection with new housing development.

The city's decision to create a duplicative park system will have a variety of impacts on residents and taxpayers. These include:

- Money used to construct a state of the art park system for residents of Laguna Ridge will come at the expense of the entire Elk Grove community.
- The city's plans for development of the Laguna Ridge parks will result in a minimum loss of \$10 million in funding currently allotted for a community center and park, plus the 42 acre Hal Bartholomew Sports Park and recreational opportunities
- The loss of funding due to the city's actions will put tremendous pressure on the CSD's general fund, 75% of which now goes to support fire and emergency medical services. This loss of funding may greatly impact Elk Grove fire and emergency medical services, which are currently one of the best in the state.
- The loss of this park funding will also jeopardize existing and planned community-wide facilities, such as the highly successful Barbara Morse Wackford Community and Aquatics Center.
- Jeopardizing programs like the award winning Barbara Morse Wackford Community and Aquatic Center will undermine existing partnerships with local schools, youth groups and community organizations, damaging the overall community.
- The city can extract fees from developers to construct its parks, but it has no designated funding for ongoing operation and maintenance costs. Unless new homeowners are charged additional fees on top of the development fees included in the price of their homes, operation and maintenance costs must come from somewhere else in the city budget, likely in the form of higher taxes, assessments or cuts to other important city programs.
- The cost of maintenance and repairs for parks of the type the city desires are quite substantial. For example, the city wishes to utilize artificial turf on playing fields. The initial cost will be paid through developer fees (which add to the already soaring price of new homes), but replacement and

maintenance costs will be the city's responsibility. Artificial turf costs \$600,000 to install and lasts approximately 7 to 10 years before it must be replaced, at a cost of up to \$300,000 per field.

- Residents of Laguna Ridge and other new developments could be forced by the city to pay two sets of park fees and taxes – one to the city for their new park operations, and another to support our existing community services district that has been providing park and recreation services to the entire Elk Grove area for the past 20 years. These duplicate fees could total thousands of dollars per year per parcel or lot.
- The city will have to hire staff to develop, provide oversight, maintenance and supervision of their park service, duplicating the existing expertly trained staffing infrastructure currently in place with the CSD. Again, experience has shown that city governments historically have raised fees or use re-direct existing tax dollars originally intended for other city programs to maintain parks, thereby cutting funding from other important city programs. Then when city budgets are hit with other special interest needs, park and recreational programs are the first to get hit with budget cuts.
- The City of Elk Grove has no experience in park design, development, operations or maintenance. The CSD has been providing superior park, recreation, fire and emergency medical services to the Elk Grove community for the past 20 years.
- The CSD has an expertly trained staff with years of experience in running recreation programs. There are currently 216 staff members employed in the parks and recreation department. The city does not have a single staff member experienced in recreation programming.
- The CSD operates 10 Kid Central sites throughout the community, providing before and after school activities for children. If the city begins duplicating services, the funds currently used to sustain these sites may be lost.